

Message Text

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ACTION ITFE-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 SR-02 ORM-01 IO-10 AID-05

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0369

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 15323

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, VS

SUBJECT: WHEREABOUTS OF NGUYEN XUAN PHONG FORMER GVN
MINISTER FOR NEGOTIATIONS

REF: PARIS 13708

1. ROBERT TRAN VAN DON, FORMER CHARGE IN ATHENS AND PREVIOUSLY MEMBER OF THE GVN DELEGATION FOR THE CELLE ST. CLOUD TALKS, INFORMED US THAT MME. PHONG'S MOTHER HAD RECEIVED WORD OF THE PHONGS FROM A NIECE OF PHONG'S WHO HAD RECENTLY COME TO PARIS FROM SAIGON (DON COMMENTED SHE IS PROBABLY A FRENCH NATIONAL). THE NIECE SAID SHE HAD SEEN THE PHONGS BEFORE LEAVING SAIGON AND FOUND THEM RESIDING AT HOME (96, RUE LAO THANG), IN GOOD HEALTH, AND LIVING "NORMALLY". MRS. PHONG HOPED TO BE ABLE TO LEAVE SAIGON SOON BY USING HER FRENCH PASSPORT; HER FRIENDS HERE SAY SHE HAS ONLY FRENCH NATIONALITY.

2. DON ALSO HAD LEARNED FROM A FRENCH FRIEND WORKING FOR AIR FRANCE THAT PHONG'S BROTHER WAS STILL WORKING "NORMALLY" AS ASSISTANT TO THE GENERAL MANAGER OF AIR VIETNAM. DON THOUGHT THIS INFORMATION WAS REASSURING ABOUT PHONG ALSO.

3. DON SAID THAT MATHIVET, AS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL, HAD INFORMED HIM THAT THE PRG HAD SENT A
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FORMAL NOTE TO THE GOF CLAIMING THE DELEGATION ACCOUNTS

IN THE FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK AND GIVING THE ACCOUNT NUMBERS. THE NOTE FURTHER REPORTED THAT THE FORMER ACCOUNTANT (LIEU) AND OTHER PERSONNEL OF THE DELEGATION HAD ACCUSED PHONG OF IMPROPRIETIES IN HANDLING DELEGATION FUNDS. DON THOUGHT THAT THE PRG HAD PROBABLY PRESSURED THE PERSONNEL INTO SUCH ACCUSATIONS AND THAT THEY MIGHT CAUSE TROUBLE FOR PHONG IN SAIGON.

4. WE INFORMED QUAI ACTING DIRECTOR FOR ASIA BOLLE THAT MRS. PHONG WOULD BE TRYING TO LEAVE SAIGON ON HER FRENCH PASSPORT. HE HAD BEEN UNAWARE OF HER FRENCH NATIONALITY AND TOOK NOTE, PROBABLY TO INFORM THE FRENCH EMBASSY IN SAIGON.

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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